Abstract

Introduction: Neuropsychiatry is based on social and scientific narratives developed since the XIX century in order to understand and deal with “mental symptoms” found in the context of neurological diseases. Objective: This is an effort to answer this question: Are mental symptoms in neurology the same ones as those found in general psychiatry? Method: Analysis of the diverse symptoms found in some diseases so that the neuropsychiatrist can develop a current and refined descriptive psychopathology without trying to “naturalize” these symptoms in a simplistic way, reducing them to putative biological markers. Conclusions: Frequently, neurological symptoms are not psychiatric, for instance, hallucinations in severe melancholia are only superficially similar to “organic” hallucinations in Parkinson’s disease. In this sense, the possibility that some symptoms are not only functional copies of other symptoms (behavioral phenocopies) should be seriously considered, since such differences could have important therapeutic implications.

Keywords
Neurology, psychiatry, psychopathology, nervous system diseases